

**Proposed Revision of the Charter of the City of Bridgeport to be voted on in the City of Bridgeport in the
Election to be held on Tuesday, November 6, 2012**

Bill Finch, Mayor

Alma Maya, Town Clerk

NOTICE: Pursuant to §9-369b(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), as amended, the following is a designation of the proposed amendments to the Charter of the City of Bridgeport, in accordance with C.G.S. §7-188. Said proposals were prepared by the Bridgeport Charter Revision Commission and approved for submission to the electorate by the City Council. The proposed revision of the Charter was published, in its entirety, in the Connecticut Post on September 2, 2011. The Bridgeport Question will be designated as Question No. 1. If a majority of the electors voting on this amendment to the Charter approve same, it shall become a part of the City's Charter.

Attest: _____

Alma Maya, Town Clerk

QUESTION #1: "SHALL THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT APPROVE AND ADOPT THE CHARTER CHANGES AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL, INCLUDING EDUCATION GOVERNANCE REFORMS?"

Explanation. The question deals broadly with restructuring the governance, policy development and regulatory powers of the City of Bridgeport, in the first instance, by organizing the Charter by governmental function. The following addresses some of the key provisions in each Chapter:

Chapter 1 – Construction of the General Provisions: Assembles definitions used throughout the Charter in one location.

Chapter 2 – Incorporation and General Powers: Sets forth the incorporation and general grant of powers of the City conferred by the State Constitution, the General Statutes and the Special Acts.

Chapter 3 – Elections, Electors, Elected Officials Terms of Office and General Provisions Regarding the Continuity of Government.

Places all elected officials in one section of the Charter and spells out the term of office and date of election for the Mayor, City Clerk, Town Clerk, the City Council, Sheriffs and Registrars of Voters. The Chapter also makes reference to the fact that the Sheriffs serve as the Constables of the City and also contains a transition provision pertaining to the remaining term of office for the elected members of the Board of Education. This Chapter also addresses eligibility to serve, vacancies in elective office, reapportionment of voting districts, the transfer of public records to successors, surety bonds required of certain public officials and conflict of interest and ethics standards. This Chapter adds procedures and specific grounds for the removal of elected and appointed officials from office, which is authorized by Special Act. There are also rules pertaining to temporary disability or absence of the Mayor.

Chapter 4 - The Office of the Mayor. Reaffirms the current provisions regarding the executive tasks and appointing authority of the Mayor. The proposed provisions include the responsibilities of the Mayor and the City Council regarding the declaration of a public emergency, including a process for the appropriation and expenditure of funds and the adoption ordinance and other emergency measures.

Chapter 5 - The City Council. Reiterates the current powers and duties of the City Council and includes the statutory requirement facing the legislative authority in the Council. New provision includes: (1) Requiring the establishment of other Council offices at the commencement of the term; (2) Authorizing the establishing of a non-partisan office of legislative services; (3) Permitting the hiring of employees by the President of the Council; (4) Formalizing the current practice of creating committees to effectuate the operations, administration, legislative and oversight functions of the Council; (5) Clarifying the role of the Council in the removal of members; (6) Detailing the oversight function of the City Council; and, (7) Necessitating the adoption of rules and procedures regarding the adoption of resolutions, order and other legislative enactments.

Chapter 6 - Other Elected Officials of the City. Consolidates in one chapter the powers and prerogatives of the City Clerk, Town Clerk, The City Sheriffs or Constables and Registrars of Voters. New provisions include a requirement for the Town Clerk to participate in the certification program for town clerks and the change of the title "City Sheriff" to "Constable" following the 2013 municipal election.

Chapter 7 - Boards and Commissions. Sets forth the general requirements for all appointed boards and commissions including method of creation, appointment, vacancy, residency, dual appointment prohibition, term limitations, minority party representation and diversity of membership, prohibition of compensation, required cooperation between board members and departments officials, compliance with ethics rules and removal from office. The Charter creates the following: (1) Board of Education, see below; (2) Civil Service Commission; (3) Board of Police Commissioners; (4) Board of Fire Commissioners; (5) Planning and Zoning Commission; (6) Board of Tax Review; (7) Board of Public Purchases; (8) Airport Commission; (9) Board of Park Commissioners; (10) Board of Directors of the Bridgeport Public Library. The Park Commission is reduced from eight to seven members and the Parking Authority is repealed. The Charter would also require the creation

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and continuation of an Ethics Commission and authorize the Council to create Boards and Commission by ordinance. Under this chapter ex officio members would be authorized to appoint designated representatives. This provision also restricts former public officials or political party officers from serving on the Civil Service Commission and Board of Education for a period of three years following their service.

Board of Education Issues. This Chapter includes a nine (9) member Board of Education appointed for four (4) year terms by Mayor, subject to approval by the City Council. The new board will be in full effect on December 1, 2015 following phase-out of current elected members; in other words, five (5) members will be appointed on or about December 1, 2013 and four (4) members will be appointed on or about December 1, 2015. The Board Members will be subject to all the rules covering all members of Boards and Commissions; however, will be subject to special rules and restrictions: qualifications, including a list of attributes and life and occupational experience (subject to review by the Candidate Qualifications Advisory Council); and, mandatory training beyond the requirements of state law at the commencement of their term and, again, as a pre-requisite to reappointment is required. Interference by individual members with the day-to-day performance of the Superintendent of Schools would violate the Charter. Moreover, the Charter spells out the powers and purposes of the Board of Education are clearly set forth in the Charter.

Chapter 8 – City Government: Departments and Department Heads. Affirms the authority to establish, by ordinance, such departments as are necessary to carry out its municipal functions. The Charter also delineates the following departmental functions and administrators: (1) **Office of the Chief Administrative Officer** (the CAO) ; (2) **The Law Department** (the City Attorney); (3) **Labor Relations** (the Director); (4) **Government Administration:** The Office of Policy and Management (the Director), Finance (the Director), Tax Collector, Tax Assessor, The City Treasurer, Purchasing Agent, Personnel and Civil Service (the Director) and Information Technology Services (the Director); (5) **Infrastructure, Public Works and Parks:** the Director of Public Facilities, the City Engineer, Director of Parks and Recreation; (6) **Public Safety and Protective Services:** the Chief of Police, the Fire Chief and the Health District; (7) **Education, Health and Community Services:** the Superintendent of Schools, the City Librarian, the Director of Health and Social Services and the Director of Public Health; (8) **Economic Development, Planning, Zoning Enforcement and Environment:** Director of Planning and Economic Environment and Director of Land Use Construction and Review. Other departments may be established by Ordinance. Establishes procedures permitting: (1) departmental reorganizations so long as the Charter mandated functions are met by the City based upon a finding by the City Attorney; and (2) internal departmental reorganizations. Moreover, this chapter establishes the process for appointment and removal of department heads, identifies officials appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Mayor, appointed by the Mayor subject to civil service rules and appointment of the Superintendent of Schools by the Board of Education, the City Librarian appointed by the Board of Directors of the Library Board, the Personnel Director appointed by the Civil Service Commission and the City Treasurer appointed by the Mayor for a two year term. This provision also establishes general requirements applicable to all department heads and Mayoral department appointees: (a) general authority of department heads; (b) qualifications; (c) compensation; (d) residency requirements, (e) terms, (f) liability; (g) alteration of position titles; and, (h) a full time service requirement. rules pertaining to employment contracts, authority and qualifications, residency requirements and liability.

Chapter 9 – Budget and Fiscal Controls. A recodification of the current provisions with some refinements in terminology and process: (1) adjustment of appropriations require a 2/3rds vote of the City Council; (2) all department heads required to provide the Mayor with financial information regarding budget estimates and preparation; (3) oversight hearings by the City Council on monthly financial reports require ed by the Charter.

Chapter 10 – Bonding and Long Term Debt. Recodifies current provisions with no substantial changes to current Chapter 10 of the Charter.

Chapter 11 – Pensions. Recodifies current provisions with no substantial changes to current Chapter 21 of the Charter.

Chapter 12 – Historic and Special Act Provisions of the Charter. This Chapter includes, without modification, current provisions of the Charter pertaining (1) Ordinances authorized by the Special Actions [current Chapter 5 Section 7(b), (c), (e), (f) (g) and (h) of the Charter]; (2) responsibilities of the Director of Finance pertaining to disbursements and appropriations [current Chapter 8 Section 2 of the Charter]; (3) Civil Service and Merit System [current Chapter 17 of the Charter]; (4) Public Improvements [current Chapter 11 Section 2(b), (c), 3 (a) and (b), 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 (a) and (b), 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 , 20, 21 and 22]; (5) Park Property [current Chapter 12, Section 12, 13, 14, 15,16,17,18, 19, 20, 21 of the Charter]; (6) Responsibilities of the Director of Public Facilities [current Chapter 11, Sections 17, 18 and 19 of the Charter; and, (7) appraisal, assessment and apportionment decisions [current Chapter 11, Sections 2(a) and 15 of the Charter].

Chapter 13 – Transitional Provisions. The provisions of the revised Charter shall take effect “upon adoption by the voters...unless otherwise set forth in the Charter”. Transition provisions address principally the transition to an elected Board of Education.